

From: glenn green
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/26/01 11:03pm
Subject: Public Comment

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a computer professional, working in what is by necessity an almost pure Microsoft environment. This is not by choice, but necessity. Not because it is the best product for the job necessarily but because Microsoft has so entrenched their monopolistic, blackmail upgrade practices to the point that it is in effect the only viable solution pretty much regardless of the cost at this point in time. Happily, I don't have to make that decision in the work environment, much less justify the expense.

In the performance of my duties I have had forced Internet Explorer upgrades rammed down my throat many more times than I care for, sometimes they cause compatability problems with other microsoft products, creating a domino effect. Sometimes this results in hours of down time, not just for a workstation. The effect as applied to a server can affect an entire organisation. This merely scratches the surface, Internet Explorer upgrades have been 'required' for as innocuous things as printer drivers, this is ridiculous no, criminal!! I feel that some of the comments I have read on linuxplanet.com have stated this in an unarguable and perfectly clear fashion that I have no chance of equaling. Rather than plagerise the material I am including links. I implore, no beg of the doj to read very closly these linked comments. The current remedies are virtually benign to microsoft, it will be business as usual, nothing really changes.

<http://www.linuxplanet.com/linuxplanet/reviews/3973/2/> and
<http://www.linuxplanet.com/linuxplanet/reviews/3973/3/>

To sum up a few key points. The proposed settlement mentions disclosing api's and other intellectual property, presumable file formats. Are these being disclosed to Microsoft's only real competitor?? The open source software comunity? I fear this disclosure will be made only to Microsoft's chosen vendors or develepers under the restriction of non-disclosure.

Even were this to be disclosed to the open source community. Microsoft intentionally creates a moving target, by updating and forcing updates of key elements of this material. Not correcting known problems in existing version, but creating enhancements to new versions. We don't need html enabled email, active scripting in email and word documents, we've all seen what this enables. Yet this practice further entrenches the strangle hold on not only US consumers and businesses, but the entire world.

Remember the Haloween Documents...

The proposed penalty as it stands does virtually nothing to change this.

A personal experience with my home PCs. My newest one came with Microsoft's Windows ME, which at first glance seemed as if it may be an acceptable solution to maintain compatability with other (Windows 95) systems on my small lan.

Not so!! After downloading the supposedly free DirectX Ver 8 from work, which was necessary because I refused to sign up for passport on my home system when I had another avenue. I then copied it to the home PC over a dialup connection into work, planning to simply copy it over my lan to the broken PC to repair DirectX which was broken by installing a game. Ah, a third party game?? No!! A MicroSoft game, but I digress. I was unable to connect to the Windows 95 machine, unless I installed an ME networking upgrade on the Windows 95 machine. I refused to be strong armed into an upgrade of even a small component of the existing system.

At this point I had a simple solution, reboot the machine to Linux, copy the DirectX ver 8 download to a cd-rw, carry it into the other room and repair the broken PC. Upon returning to my main PC, I promptly deleted the Windows ME partition. Problem solved, I refuse to be blackmailed into any more upgrades on my personal computers.

Enough is enough. It's not as simple, it's not as compatible, it's not as elegant, but I control the upgrades, and I know at least in general terms why they are required. Microsoft will not blackmail me into any more upgrades, I'm done, furthermore I will not rent software for a year or two (XP) or whatever Microsoft's current half baked scheme is.

Again I implore the DOJ to consider the only real competitor, of which I believe Microsoft is terrified and will eliminate by any underhanded means at its disposal, legality be damned. The open source community, by introducing competition if given half a chance will force Microsoft to consider something other than what is best for Microsoft. Both quality and security will have to improve significantly if Microsoft is unable to eliminate this newest competitor, or Microsoft is going to be in trouble.

Thank you for taking the time to read this, and please consider the open source community in the penalty of the Goliath Microsoft has become.

Glenn Green
1582 Railroad Drive
Carson City, Nevada 89701